

The story of organization

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A person gets charged up by the mission and then sets up a vision. It is the 'day-dream' which doesn't let the person sleep. Jack Ma got excited by an idea to 'help organizations in China to develop ease of doing businesses.' Similarly founders of another Chinese company, Xiaomi wanted to 'better the life of people by providing fantastic products at honest price.' The person decides to transform the vision into a reality.

Realizing that mission and vision needs multiple hands and brains, the person starts getting associated with like-minded people. His/her good work becomes an inspiration for growing number of people and they start joining the cause. Thus, a team is built. The team chooses the person to lead them. The leader gets birth. The cause (mission) and the team become leader's parents. A leader belongs to the mission and to the team.

As the team grows in size it becomes important to create a structure by defining the roles, responsibilities and relationships. The team gets transformed into an organization. Team was a smaller unit with informal relationships and stronger interpersonal bonds. But the organization is a scaled-up version of the team with many new entrants. There are many transformation losses. Leader's way of thinking, dealing and functioning creates team dynamics which gets transformed as the organizational culture. Poor orientation of the new recruits increases the transformation losses.

Once the organization takes a shape, the leader hands over its operations to the management and focuses on supporting it with resources. As the organization scales up, the leader has to dilute the ownership with the view to jack-up the resources. Avoiding the dilution of ownership result into increase of the debt and reduces the profitability. Investors become owners. They trust their funds with the leader, with the objective of maximising the returns and growth while ensuring the long-term security.

Management comprehends and transforms mission and vision into goals and objectives. They are quantified, crystal clear targets with clear scope and resource constraints. The targets are then assigned to specific members of the team in the form of job descriptions (JDs) and Key Result Areas (KRAs). JDs and KRAs integrate to form organizational objectives and goals which in turn, get combined to form the organizational mission and vision. Thus, the leader, the owners, the management and the team get bonded together with the organization.

Leader's association is for the mission and vision fulfilment. Owners want to maximise the returns on their funds invested in the form of ownership. Management wants long term returns on their sweat equity and remuneration for the deployment of their talent, time and energy. The team wants wages, career opportunities, security and social status. Thus, the story of organization gets evolved over a period of time. The central role in this story is played by the leader. Owners, management, the team, channel partners and other associates also play important roles in this story. The leader referred here is the supreme leader of the organization. However, there are other leaders as well. These leaders lead different business units, functions, departments and even smaller teams. Henceforth the term leader will be made with reference to all such leaders who lead different parts of the organization independently.

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Decision making: Roles and Responsibilities

Owners trust their money with the leader. They don't get involved in the affairs of the organization like depositors keep deposits in the bank but do not get involved in the banking matters. The leader and the management get involved in the business activities.

Supreme leader makes strategic and policy decisions like the direction of the organization, its brand, allocation of profits, induction of the senior management, raising and allocation of funds, top and bottom line, scale, strategic alliances and partnerships, managing the regulators and law, deciding on the reaction pattern for the competitors' moves, etc.

The management is the team of managers, arranged in the formal reporting structure and responsible for the organizational goals and objectives. It makes decisions on the operational matters like business model, strategy, tactics, procurement, sales and marketing, Human Relations Management, working capital and Finance, etc.

What is leadership development?

Every leader has a team, a mission or goal, ecosystem and resources. All these things form the universe of the leader. Providing inputs to the leader to help him/her master this universe is the objective of the well-crafted leadership development program. Such program is like a vaccine. It helps leader to tune to his universe and to fight any external attack. It improves the natural immunity of the leader so that he can defend his business in the Volatile-Uncertain-Complex and Ambiguous (VUCA) environment.

Leadership development is finding out the leadership seed and nurturing that seed. It is also about supporting existing leaders in the industry so that they achieve business excellence. The leadership development program opens mind of the leader and makes him/her think radically on certain leadership issues. It instigates leaders to question their assumptions and hypotheses. It alters perceptions and perspectives of the leaders so that they can spread their wings, take a big leap forward and achieve the scale. Leadership development is about spotting the leadership talent, at the beginning of the career, and grooming these emerging leaders. It is also about training and empowering managers to get transformed as the leaders.

Mentor: A leadership coach

Leadership development program is conducted by a mentor who is also a coach. A mentor has a different tools and methods. A noble way of sharing. A coach is a domain expert, he does analysis, highlights pitfalls. A mentor is a philosopher, does synthesis, shows the direction. A coach shapes performance, A mentor explores potential. A coach imparts training, particularly for skill improvement. A mentor engages in counselling. He focuses on philosophy, principles, thought process & attitude moulding. Coaching is a continuous process. A coach has a plan. Mentoring is need-based rather than a continuous process. A coach focuses on the operational aspects, focuses on details. A mentor operates on the broader conceptual level without getting into detailing. A coach tracks the progress, gets feedback, sets goals. Mentor dispenses knowledge & insights. He then waits for wisdom to sprout. Coaches win matches, mentors win empires. Coaches win battles, mentors win wars. Coaches flash on the front pages. Mentors carve history.

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